

4 a user information general management means, generally managing user registration
5 information, about users of hardware and software products, and using status information
6 thereof transmitted from the user; and

7 a user registration/reference means that interfaces with the users notifying said user
8 information general management means of the user registration information and the using
9 status information at a request of the user and the using status information,

10 wherein the user registration information comprises personal information about
11 each user containing an identification number of each user and registration information
12 containing a type of information which is requested by the users with regard to the computer-
13 related products, said type of information can include [a version update or] information about
14 products which can be used in combination with products that are used by the users, and

15 new information about the computer-related products from a vendor side of the
16 computer-related products is extracted, depending on information extraction condition
17 containing a requested information type in the registration information, and is transmitted to
18 said user registration/reference means [when said user registration/reference means requests, at
19 a request from the users,] from said user information general management means to provide
20 the new information.

1 2. (AS ONCE AMENDED) The system according to claim 1, wherein
2 said user registration/reference means requests at a request from the user said user
3 information general management means to provide new information about the computer-related
4 product from a vendor of the computer-related product.

1 3. (AS ONCE AMENDED) The system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the computer-related product is a software product, and said user registration/reference
3 means is common to each of a plurality of software products;
4 when any of the plurality of software products is installed by a user, the user

5 registration/reference means is also installed; and
6 after installation, said user registration/reference means issues a notification about the
7 user registration information and using status information for the plurality of software products
8 which are installed, and submits a request for new information about the software product.

1 4. (AS ONCE AMENDED) The system according to claim 1, wherein
2 said user registration information comprises:
3 personal information about each user including an
4 identification number of each user; and
5 registration information containing a type of information
6 requested by the user about a computer related product; and
7 said user information general management means extracts the new information
8 depending on information extraction condition containing a requested information type in the
9 registration information at a request for new information about a computer-related product
10 from said user registration/reference means, and transmits the new information to said user
11 registration/reference means.

1 5. (AS ONCE AMENDED) The system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the computer-related product is a software product and the using status information
3 contains the number of times the software product was started; and
4 said user information general management means transmits new information about the
5 software product to said user registration/reference means depending on the number of times
6 the software product was started.

1 6. (AS ONCE AMENDED) The system according to claim 1, wherein
2 the computer-related product is a software product and the using status information
3 contains the number of times the software product was started; and

4 said user registration/reference means requests said user information general
5 management means to provide new information about the software product when the number of
6 times the software product was started has reached a predetermined value.

1 7. (AS ONCE AMENDED) The system according to claim 1, further comprising:
2 a vendor registration/reference means for obtaining the user registration information
3 and the using status information from said user information general management means, and
4 notifying said user information general management means of new information about the
5 computer-related product.

1 8. (AS ONCE AMENDED) The system according to claim 7, wherein
2 the user registration information contains a type of information, requested by a user,
3 about a computer-related product;
4 said vendor registration/reference means specifies a type of new information when new
5 information about the computer-related product is available; and
6 said user information general management means compares the type of information
7 requested by the user with the type specified by the vendor registration/reference means, and
8 when both types coincide, transmits the new information to said user registration/reference
9 means at a request from said user registration/reference means when the requested information
10 is available.

1 9. (AS ONCE AMENDED) The system according to claim 8, wherein
2 one type of said information refers to information about a linking operation with a
3 computer-related product provided by another vendor.

1 10. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A management apparatus which manages user
2 information about a computer-related product used by a user terminal connected through a
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3 network, comprising:

4 a user information general management means for managing using status information
5 and a requested information type provided by the user terminal about a product used by a user;

6 a product information management means for managing product information provided
7 by a vendor of the computer-related product including product information about additional
8 products that can be used with a particular product; and

9 a product information notification means for referring to a product used by each user
10 managed by said user information general management means and for providing product
11 information managed by said product information management means about a product used by
12 a user which corresponds to the [requested information type] products that can be used with the
13 product used by the user and match the user's requested information type.

1 11. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A computer-readable storage medium encoded
2 with software to cause a computer to perform the actions of:

3 managing using status information and a requested information type provided by a user
4 terminal about a product used by a user;

5 managing product information provided by a computer-related product vendor including
6 product information about additional products that can be used with a particular product; and

7 referring to the using status information and providing product information about [the]
8 additional products that can be used with the product used by a user and which corresponds to
9 the requested information type at a product information request from the user terminal.

1 12. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A user terminal apparatus comprising:

2 a user information notification means for notifying an external unit of user registration
3 information and using status information including a product used by a user and a requested
4 information type about the computer-related product; and

5 a product information reference means for requesting an external unit for new

6 information about the computer-related product which corresponds to the requested
7 information type from a computer-related product vendor and information on additional
8 products that can be used with the product used by the user.

1 13. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A computer-readable storage medium encoded
2 with software for causing a computer to perform the actions of:
3 notifying an external unit of user registration information and using status information
4 including a product used by a user and a requested information type about a computer-related
5 product used by a user; and
6 requesting an external unit for new information about the computer-related product
7 which corresponds to the requested information type from a vendor of the computer related
8 product and information on additional products that can be used with the product used by the
9 user.

1 14. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A vendor terminal apparatus comprising:
2 a user information reference means for obtaining, from an external unit, user
3 registration information including a requested information type and using status information
4 including a product used by the user transmitted from a user of a computer-related product;
5 and
6 a product information notification means for notifying an external unit of new
7 information about the computer-related product, if the new information about the computer-
8 related product corresponds to the requested information type, the new information including
9 additional products that can be used with the product used by the user.

1 15. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) A computer-readable storage medium encoded
2 with software to cause a computer to perform the actions of:
3 obtaining, from an external unit, user registration information including a requested

information type, and using status information including a product used by a user, transmitted from [a] the user of a computer-related product; and

notifying an external unit of new information about the computer-related product, if the new information about the computer-related product corresponds to the requested information type, the new information including additional products that can be used with the product used by the user.

16. (TWICE AMENDED) A computer implemented management system, which manages registration of computer-related products, comprising:

a user information general management module generally managing user registration information including a requested information type, and using status information including a product used by a user, transmitted from a user of the computer-related product; and

a user registration/reference module that interfaces with a user of the computer-related products notifying said user information general management module of the user registration information and the using status information and information about additional products that can be used with the product used by the user at a request of the user who uses a computer-related product related to the user registration information and the using status information and which corresponds to the requested information type.

17. (NEVER AMENDED) The system according to claim 16, wherein the computer-related product is a software product, and said user registration/reference module is common to each of a plurality of software products; when any of the plurality of software products is installed by a user, the user registration/reference module is also installed; and after installation, said user registration/reference means issues a notification about the user registration information and using status information for the plurality of software products which are installed, and submits a request for new information about the software product.

1 18. (TWICE AMENDED) A user registration center managing and distributing
2 information provided by both a user and a vendor comprising:
3 [a receiving module receiving a product information from the vendor;
4 a user information module receiving a user information including using status from the
5 user and a requested information type;
6 a database storing the product information and the user information; and
7 a distributing module distributing, from the data, user information to the vendor and
8 product information to the user which corresponds to the requested information type and using
9 status.]
10 a database receiving, from the vendor product information about a product and
11 additional product information about additional products that can be used with the product;
12 the database receiving, from the user, user information which includes a product used
13 by the user and a requested information type from the user; and
14 a distributing module, automatically distributing to the user, additional product
15 information corresponding to the additional products that can be used with the product used by
16 the user and which match the user's requested information type.

1 19. (TWICE AMENDED) A method of managing and distributing information
2 provided by both a user and a vendor comprising:
3 receiving, from the vendor, product information [from the vendor] about a product and
4 additional product information about additional products that can be used with the product;
5 receiving, from the user, user information [from the user] which includes a product
6 used by the user[; receiving] and and a requested information type from the user;
7 storing the product information about a product and additional product information
8 about products that can be used with the product and the user information which includes a